



Newsletter No. 20, November 2008

Hello Safe Routes to School coordinators and friends! Here is what's new with Michigan's Safe Routes to School program this month:

SR2S Annual Meeting Reminder

Please plan to attend the Safe Routes to School Annual Meeting in Lansing on January 26. The annual meeting will focus on planning for safer routes to school and developing sustainable initiatives. Look for registration information in December!

Safer Routes to School (and a greener commute!) for Middle School

The Michigan SR2S middle school curriculum is expected in March 2009! The curriculum engages youth in a hands-on planning process to increase walking and/or bicycling to school, while also achieving learning objectives in social studies, civics, and technology. The series of lessons introduces youth to the safe routes to school movement (and it's green implications), local government, mapping tools and technologies, and provides hands-on experience collecting and analyzing information on walking/bicycling conditions. The final product is a PowerPoint presentation delivered by youth to their peers and local community leaders.

Middle school principals received a letter this month, announcing the forthcoming curriculum. A number of enthusiastic principals and teachers have already phoned the SR2S office asking for more details. Early adopters will have the chance to participate in special kick-off activities and contests.

Also coming in January 2009 is a short video featuring Michigan youth who participated in safe routes to school activities in their communities. The video will be accessible through the saferoutesmichigan.org website and will be mailed to schools and advocates statewide.

If you would like more information about this project or to get your school and students involved, please contact Andrea Cawthray at (800) 434-8642, or by e-mail at acawthray@michiganfitness.org.

Youth Engagement

When it comes to increasing walking (and bicycling) to school, on safer routes, the behavior and attitudes of youth are extremely important. What makes it cool for young people to walk or bike? What role might the green movement – or any youth-led movement – play in changing the beliefs and behaviors of youth leaders?

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Youth have been communicating and socializing online more and more-posting text, pictures, and videos and setting the agenda for what matters. SR2S will join these conversations and feature students' perspectives of the program through a channel familiar to them – the Youth-voice Blog.

The Youth-voice blog, or interactive online journal, is currently being created so students in Michigan and across the world can share their experiences about their walk and/or bike to school in a controlled online environment. This blog will go live in the next few weeks. There will be a video contest on the blog site that youth can participate in to win great prizes! Stay tuned!

2008 SR2S Questionnaire

All principals and coordinators from registered schools should have received the Annual SR2S Questionnaire from Alex Nikoloff via e-mail. The questionnaire serves two main purposes: 1) it will help us track and evaluate the SR2S program on a statewide basis and 2) the information you provide will help our office better serve your SR2S team.

The questionnaire will take 3-5 minutes to complete. All schools that complete the questionnaire will be entered into a prize drawing. **Please complete the questionnaire no later than Friday, December 5, 2008 to be included in the drawing. Complete one questionnaire per school if you assist multiple school teams.** Please contact Alex Nikoloff with questions at (800) 434-8642, or by e-mail at anikoloff@michiganfitness.org.

Thanks, and please remember to call our office if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions!

Best wishes,

Andrea